

Almost two years ago to the day, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), announced that she had a “commonsense plan to help bring down skyrocketing gas prices.” With national gas prices hovering precariously close to \$4 a gallon, I can’t help but wonder when this commonsense plan is going to sh... Almost two years ago to the day, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), announced that she had a “commonsense plan to help bring down skyrocketing gas prices.”

With national gas prices hovering precariously close to \$4 a gallon, I can’t help but wonder when this commonsense plan is going to show up. Despite the elaborate rhetoric Speaker Pelosi has fed to the American people, she doesn’t really have a “commonsense plan” to bring gas prices down. In fact since January of 2007, when Democrats took control of Congress, the average price of gas was \$2.33; as I write this article, the average price of gas nationwide is \$3.77. That is a 61% increase since the beginning of the 110th Congress.

I often times am asked why gas prices continue to increase, and my answer is somewhat complex, but it boils down to one simple fact. Democrat policies under Pelosi’s leadership have resulted in the handcuffing of domestic energy exploration.

I support domestic exploration of energy resources. Whether it is from the land or sea, as long as environmental, economic and aesthetic effects are minimized and locally supported it should be investigated.

Many Californians, myself included, have made it very clear that we do not want energy exploration off our coast, while people in Alaska and other states along the Gulf of Mexico have made it very clear that they do support it. Each coastal state ought to have the power to decide what is best for their constituencies. We should no longer prohibit the extraction of oil from major known U.S. reserves such as Alaska, the Gulf of Mexico, and oil shale in the Dakotas. It is important that we lift these restrictions to boost our oil and gas production rather than count on a foreign country to do it for us.

But that is not all; we also should be developing all available alternative sources of energy such as nuclear and clean coal and biodiesels. We should eliminate the tariffs on imported ethanol and sugar cane so we can lower the price of ethanol and other alcohol-based alternatives.

The current energy situation is just one of many pressing issues facing this Congress. Unfortunately, last week, Speaker Pelosi and her leadership team made sure the House considered important legislation which included, Promoting the safe operation of 15-passenger vans, expressing support for designation of March 11, 2008, as "National Funeral Director and Mortician Recognition Day," and Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that there should be established a National Watermelon Month. When Americans across California and the country are struggling to keep their gas tanks full, the question I ask is the premium of Pelosi's leadership really worth it?